

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: PARTIES CLARIFY POSITIONS IN CHAMBER DEBATE

SUMMARY: SINCE THE PARTIES HAD ALREADY EXPRESSED THEIR POSITIONS IN THE SENATE CONFIDENCE VOTE ON AUGUST 6, THE CHAMBER DEBATE ON THE ANDREOTTI MINORITY GOVERNMENT HELD NO SURPRISES. THE LOWER HOUSE IS SCHEDULED TO DELIVER ITS VOTE OF CONFIDENCE THIS EVENING, AUGUST 11. HOWEVER, THE CHAMBER DEBATE DID PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO CLARIFY FURTHER THE POSITION OF EACH PARTY TOWARD

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THE NEW GOVERNMENT. MAJOR ATTENTION FOCUSED ON THE

PCI'S BERLINGUER ("THIS GOVERNMENT DEPENDS ON US"), THE DC'S ZACCAGNINI (THE DC WILL REMAIN TRUE TO THE ELECTORATE'S REPUDIATION OF THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE), AND THE PSI'S CRAXI (BOTH PCI AND DC HEGEMONY MUST BE SPURNED). THE MOST PESSIMISTIC ASSESSMENT CAME FROM THE PRI'S LA MALFA (THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE IS NOW VIRTUALLY INEVITABLE). END SUMMARY.

1. DURING TWO DAYS OF DEBATE (AUGUST 9010) IN THE CHAMBER, LEADERS OF ALL PARTIES SOUGHT TO CLARIFY FURTHER THEIR POSITIONS TOWARD ANDREOTTI'S MINORITY GOVERNMENT. MOST ATTENTION FOCUSED ON SPEECHES BY THE PCI'S BERLINGUER, THE DC'S ZACCAGNINI, AND THE PSI'S NEW SECRETARY, CRAXI.

2. BERLINGUER'S HOUR-AND-A-HALF SPEECH WAS HARD-HITTING AND DECISIVE IN TONE. EXPLAINING THE REASONS FOR THE PCI'S DECISION TO ABSTAIN, IT APPEARED TO BE DIRECTED AS MUCH TO THE PARTY'S RANK-AND-FILE AS TO THE OTHER PARTIES SEATED IN THE CHAMBER. REPEATEDLY EMPHASIZING THE PCI'S "DETERMINING" ROLE ("THE NEW FACT IS THAT THE EXISTANCE OF THIS GOVERNMENT DEPENDS ON US"), BERLINGER SAID THAT THE DECISION TO ABSTAIN WAS "NOT AN ACT OF NECESSITY" BUT ONE WHICH IS FULLY CONSISTENT WITH THE PCI'S POLICY OF THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE AND GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY. "THE OLD SYSTEM OF FORMING GOVERNMENTS," BERLINGUER ASSETTED, "HAS BEEN DEALT A SEVERE BLOW," IN PRACTICALLY GLOATING TERMS, THE MIC LEADER SAID THAT THE NEW MAJORITY NOW INCLUDES THE PCI, AND THAT ALTHOUGH THE SHFIT HASN'T BEEN SOLIDIFIED AS YET, FORCES ALREADY EXIST WORKING TOWARD A NEW GOVERNMENT OF EVEN WIDER COLLABORATION. HOWEVER, BERLINGUER EMPHASIZED THAT THE PCI'S HANDS WERE NOT TIED, AND THAT THE PCI RESERVED THE RIGHT TO JUDGE THE NEW GOVERNMENT "MOMENT BY MOMENT IN FULL LIBERTY."

3. DC SECRETARY ZACCAGNINI COUNTERED WITH A FIRM NEGATION OF ANY INTENTION TO ACCEPT THE PCI'S HISTORIC COMPROMISE OR THE PROPOSED COALITION GOVERNMENT OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NATIONAL EMERGENCY. BOTH THESE COURSES, ZACCAGNINI SAID, WERE REPUDIATED AT THE POLLS IN JUNE "WHEN NEARLY 40 PERCENT OF THE ELECTORATE CONFIRMED THE DC AS THE PARTY OF THE RELATIVE MAJORITY." WHILE HE EXPECTED THE DIALOGUE IN PARLIAMENT TO BE "HARSH AND INEVITABLE," THE DC WOULD NOT BE "FORCED INTO DEVELOPMENTS THAT IT WOULD NOT HAVE ACCEPTED ON ITS OWN." THE DC LEADER ALSO DENIED THAT AFTER THE ELECTIONS

THERE HAD BEEN A SHIFT TO THE RIGHT WITHIN THE PARTY.
HE APPEALED FOR A GREATER DIALOGUE WITH THE PSI AND LAY
PARTIES, "TO WHOM WE HAVE NEVER HIDDEN OUR INCLINATION
FOR DIRECT COLLABORATION." COMMENT: ZACCAGNINI
APPEARED TO BE APPEALING DIRECTLY FOR RENEWAL OF THE
TRADITIONAL CENTER-LEFT COALITION, IN THE FUTURE.
END COMMENT.

4. IN HIS FIRST MAJOR PARLIAMENTARY SPEECH SINCE HIS
ELECTION AS PSI SECRETARY, CRAXI SOUGHT TO UNDERLINE
HIS PARTY'S AUTONOMY IN ITS RELATIONS BOTH WITH THE PCI
AND THE DC. ONE SHOULDN'T FORGET, HE SAID, THAT
ANDREOTTI'S GOVERNMENT "IS CONDITIONED BY VOTES FROM
THE LEFT, NOT ONLY FROM THE COMMUNISTS BUT BY THE
SOCIALISTS AS WELL." THE PSI IS NOT WILLING TO SUBSTITUTE
DC HEGEMONY WITH PCI HEGEMONY. CRAXI CALLED FOR THE
INDEPENDENT DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW SOCIALISM THAT AVOIDED
BOTH "THE SOCIALISM OF WANT AND SQUALOR" AND "THE
SOCIALISM OF BUREAUCRACY."

5. CRAXI ALSO SET FORTH HIS PARTY'S POSITION IN SUPPORT
OF EUROPEAN UNITY AND FOR NATO AS "THE PIVOT OF
EUROPEAN DEFENSE." HE WAS HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE DC,
HOWEVER, FOR FAILING TO ASSERT ITALY'S INDEPENDENCE
IN THESE BODIES AND PREVENT FOREIGN INTERFERENCE
IN THE COUNTRY'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. THE SCHMIDT DECLAR-
ATIONS, HE ASSERTED, SATISFIED ELECTION NEEDS IN THE US
AND THE FRG. CRAXI CRITICIZED THE "SMALL METTERNICH
AT PUERTO RICO" FOR TREATING ITALY "AS IF IT WERE A
COLONY."

6. REPUBLICAN SEVETARY BIASINI CALLED THE ANDREOTTI
GOVERNMENT "A CLEARLY PROVISIONAL SOLUTION". HIS
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SPEECH ECHOED A WIDELY QUOTED EDITORIAL BY PRI LEADER
LA MALFA IN THE AUGUST 9 EDITION OF VOCE REPUBRICANA
IN WHICH ITALY'S FUTURE POLITICAL COURSE WAS OUTLINED
IN THE SAME PROFOUNDLY PESSIMISTIC TERMS. DECLARING
THAT ITALY'S FORMER GOVERNING PARTIES HAD LOST
THE ABILITY TO GOVERN, LA MALFA HELD THAT "THE WHOLE
POLITICAL SITUATION IS MOVING TOWARD THE COMMUNIST
PARTY. IT IS NOT YET SAID THAT THE PCI'S COMING TO
POWER WILL SAVE ITALY FROM THE CRISIS, BUT THIS WILL
PROBABLY BE THE LAST CARD THAT WILL HAVE TO BE
PLAYED." IN LA MALFA'S VIEW, THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE
IS NOW "VIRTUALLY INEVITABLE."VOLPE

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